United Nations

Daily Highlights

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WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Cease-fire agreement reached between parties in Bosnia and Herzegovina regarding area in and around Sarajevo; agreement, brokered by UNPROFOR, involves positioning of UNPROFOR troops in sensitive areas and UNPROFOR control of all heavy weapons.

+ In Sunday letter to NATO, issued today, Secretary-General says mortar attacks last week against civilian targets in Sarajevo make it necessary to prepare urgently for use of air strikes to deter further such attacks; meanwhile, parties to Bosnian conflict are scheduled to resume talks in Geneva tomorrow

+ Secretary-General appoints Jean Arnault as Moderator for peace talks between Government of Guatemala and opposition URNG; calls on parties to show political will needed to make talks later this month succeed.

+ UNHCR appeals yesterday for $103 million for voluntary repatriation programme in Mozambique; three-year operation seeks to help 1.5 million Mozambicans return home after 15-year civil war.

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A cease-fire agreement has been reached between the warring parties in Bosnia and Herzegovina regarding the area in and around Sarajevo. According to a United Nations spokesman, the agreement follows intensive discussions at the political and military levels brokered by Yasushi Akashi, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for former Yugoslavia, General Jean Cot, Force Commander of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), and Sir Michael Rose, UNPROFOR's Sector Commander for Sarajevo.

The agreement, sought following the series of lethal mortar attacks on Sarajevo this past weekend, involves the positioning of UNPROFOR troops in sensitive areas, monitoring, and the placing of all heavy weapons under UNPROFOR's control.

(more)

For information media—not an official record

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In the letter Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali wrote to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) on Sunday, issued at Headquarters today, he said that the mortar attacks last week against civilian targets in Sarajevo, at least one of which had been established by the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) to be the work of Bosnian Serb forces, made it necessary to prepare urgently for the use of air strikes to deter further such attacks.

Mr. Boutros-Ghali asked the Secretary-General of NATO to take action to obtain, at the earliest possible date, a decision by the North Atlantic Council to authorize the Commander-in-Chief of NATO's Southern Command to launch air strikes, at the request of the United Nations, against artillery or mortar positions in or around Sarajevo which were determined by UNPROFOR to be responsible for attacks against civilian targets in that city.

Meanwhile, as part of the ongoing effort to end the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the three parties to the conflict are scheduled to resume talks in Geneva tomorrow. The expected participants include the Bosnian Prime Minister, the Bosnian Serb leader and the Bosnian Croat leader.

In Geneva today, the Co-Chairmen of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia, Thorvald Stoltenberg and Lord Owen, held private talks today with representatives of the countries neighbouring former Yugoslavia, to discuss political, economic and security issues. Those present included the Foreign Ministers of Albania, Austria, Bulgaria, Greece, Italy and Romania, and the Deputy Foreign Minister of Hungary.

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In the Framework Agreement signed on 10 January by the Government of Guatemala and the Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca (URNG), the parties requested the Secretary-General to appoint a Moderator for their peace talks. Following consultations with them, according to a United Nations spokesman, the Secretary-General has decided to appoint Jean Arnault to that post. Mr. Arnault has been participating in the negotiations as the United Nations observer since June 1992, working under the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Marrack Goulding, as he will continue to do as Moderator.

The Secretary-General reiterated today the hope he expressed in a recent letter to the Presidents of the General Assembly and the Security Council, that the negotiations would succeed in producing an early and fair settlement. He encouraged the parties to show the political will needed to ensure the success of the next round of talks, which are to be held later this month.

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The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) appealed yesterday for a further $102.8 million for its voluntary repatriation programme this year in Mozambique. The three-year operation, the largest the office has ever undertaken in Africa, is designed to help 1.5 million Mozambicans return from six nearby African countries. It was launched in May 1993, following the signing the year before of a peace agreement between the Government of Mozambique and the Mozambique National Resistance Movement (RENAMO) which ended a 15-year civil war.

During 1993, more than 500,000 Mozambican refugees returned to their devastated country, mostly on foot. Over 600,000 more repatriants are expected back this year in time for the planting season, which normally starts in September, and for the national elections, which are scheduled to take place no later than October.

Because many potential returnees this year will have to go to locations deep inside Mozambique, UNHCR will have to provide better access to those areas, as well as various forms of transport. A large part of the money sought from donors this year will go towards expenses for transportation and other logistical facilities that have to be put in place by March.

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